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Letter dated 28 January 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a letter dated 24 January 2003 from the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to bring this letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Annex

Letter dated 24 January 2003 from the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on Stabilization Force operations for December 2002 (see enclosure). I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on Stabilization Force operations

1. Over the reporting period (1 to 31 December 2002) there were about 12,500 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and from 13 non-NATO countries.

2. During the period under review, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable despite some incidents involving inter-ethnic violence and material damage.[1]

Security

3. The Stabilization Force (SFOR) continues to contribute towards the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina; monitor compliance by the entity armed forces; conduct inspections and consolidation of weapons storage sites; provide support to the international organizations working in theatre, and to the Federation authorities in collecting weapons and ammunition in the framework of Operation Harvest; and monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country.

4. The total number of items collected for the year under Operation Harvest included 8,394 small arms (rifles, pistols and revolvers); 2,298,967 rounds of ammunition of less than 20 millimetres; 19,435 rounds of ammunition between 20 and 76 millimetres; 2,486 rounds of ammunition of more than 76 millimetres; 38,199 hand grenades; 4,156 mines; 8,163.27 kilograms of explosives; and 48,090 other items (mortars, mortar rounds, rifle grenades, and hand-made ordnance).

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

5. With regard to the violation reported last month relating to the manner in which the Republika Srpska Army (VRS) helicopters at the Zaluzani barracks were equipped, the inspection team has recommended the removal of external mounts and wiring harnesses and the destruction of ancillary equipment so that the helicopters cannot be adapted to have an attack capability. SFOR has proposed a way ahead to the Military Adviser of the Office of the High Representative in order that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe can follow up on the arms control aspects of the Florence treaty.

6. During the period under review, SFOR monitored a total of 152 training and movement activities, 101 by VRS and 51 by the Army of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH). SFOR also carried out 46 inspections and verifications of weapons and storage sites, 27 of VRS and 19 of AFBiH.

7. On 18 December, SFOR discovered a quantity of ammunition during an inspection of a government ordnance factory storage site in Rogatica — including mortar and artillery rounds, cartridges and fuses — which was neither properly accounted for nor properly stored.

8. In December, the size of the Armed Forces was approximately at the agreed defence policy level of 19,800 active personnel (the Federation with slightly fewer than 13,200, and VRS with about 6,800). New structures will be adopted, and units

will be shut down or reorganized to NATO brigade standards. Since the number of full-time active personnel is still not affordable, the concept of an active reserve force, proposed by SFOR, is being introduced, although it has not yet been politically approved.

9. SFOR chaired a second meeting on 17 December in Doboj to develop an AFBiH peace support doctrine. A workshop to finalize this doctrine is scheduled for the end of January 2003.

10. On 15 December, NATO's Director of the Balkans Task Force and the SFOR Commander met with the three members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, timed to coincide with a meeting of the Standing Committee for Military Matters. At the meeting a work plan and terms of reference for the Standing Committee secretariat were approved and the Committee was briefed on a proposed action plan to move Bosnia and Herzegovina towards membership in the Partnership for Peace. In a move towards greater civilian control, the Standing Committee has been restructured and is now composed of civilian political leaders. It has been made responsible for establishing weapons import/export controls until the State authority on trade and exports can take over.

Cooperation with international organizations

11. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre.

12. SFOR and the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) signed a technical agreement on 20 December covering information exchange, security assistance and liaison arrangements in preparation for the transition from the International Police Task Force to EUPM on 1 January 2003. During the reporting period, the EUPM deployment took place, and briefings were provided by SFOR to EUPM staff at various levels.

13. Since responsibility for Sarajevo airport is being handed over from SFOR to the local authorities on 1 January 2003, information was made available to nations in mid-December on the procedures to be followed for using the airport and ground handling facilities.

Outlook

14. The security situation continues to be stable.

Notes

[1] On 13 December, the Donji Ljubia mosque was partially damaged in an explosion. On 23 December, Orthodox and Muslim graves were damaged in Sanski Most and Prijedor. On 24 December, three members of a Bosnian Croat family were murdered in their home in Kostajnica, north-west of Konjic. The members of this family were the first refugees to resettle in Kostajnica after the war. A Bosniac man who has admitted to committing the murders has been taken into custody.